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**150 years of Amity and 50 years of Alliance:
Adopting an Enhanced Agenda for the U.S./Japan Partnership**

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The Japan-U.S. alliance has been the cornerstone of regional security, economic vitality, and democratic ideals for the past 50 years. A common vision of peace and prosperity shared by these two great nations provides a salient example of the possibility of bilateral cooperation. The road has not always been smooth and future challenges will need to be embraced. Past challenges have served to reaffirm the alliance on numerous occasions. Going forward, our countries realize that a future shaped by this alliance is the best path to global progress and stability. Maintaining respect for our unique culture, domestic priorities, and short-term goals can be difficult; however, the future of the alliance is strengthened by these challenges. The past year saw changes in political administration in both countries, presenting our new, democratically chosen leaders the opportunity to learn from events of the past and build a sound future. These changes occur, not in a vacuum, but in an Asia that is more dynamic than it has ever been. Therefore, we must continually find new ways to reassert ourselves in the region.

Japanese and U.S. officials have been working to redefine partner roles, missions, and capabilities. However, past issues are preventing the alliance from being able to focus on new topics. The current administration has diverted too much attention to old issues that have already been resolved. One example of this has been the issue of moving the U.S. Marine Corps Air Station at Futenma from its current location. Moving past this issue and looking for ways that Japan can broaden its role in providing for its own defense through increased cooperation will strengthen the alliance. An example of this cooperation is the joint development of missile and air defense systems that exploit the technological expertise of both countries. Japan displayed its willingness to take on an enhanced role in the alliance by making an exception to its principle on military exports, allowing such exports to the United States. Future defense industry initiatives, between the United States and other allies, would provide additional opportunities to expand responsibilities, commerce, and the number of collective and collaborative defense initiatives. Developing a better understanding of our individual strengths in other roles will bring more equity to the alliance.

The alliance will continue to be successful by remembering our shared values, keeping periodic challenges in perspective with long-term security objectives, maintaining the flexibility to allow for changing roles within the alliance, and emphasizing issues such as trade, climate change, and energy simultaneously with security.